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March 29, 2001      LB 486

SENATOR RAIKES: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor and members. This bill, LB 486, which is introduced by Senator Stuhr and also Senator Stuhr's priority bill, was heard in the Education Committee. The...it advanced from the Education Committee by a vote of, let me think, 5-2 and 1. There was a committee amendment adopted which I will try to highlight for you. First, the committee amendment replace provisions of the green copy, expanding the findings language; reducing the intended appropriation, as Senator Stuhr mentioned, and also adding an emergency clause. The purpose of the grant program as...as specified in the committee amendment, would be to help students assess their progress in developing the knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary education and futures careers. School districts and ESUs, or consortiums, would be eligible to apply for grants and these grants would be used to measure student achievement and also for costs of training staff to implement measurement instruments. So a main focus of her bill is assessment and measurement. Feasibility studies would be completed under the bill by the Department of Education on the assessment instruments with the intent of determining to what extent they measure the...the assessment instruments measure achievement of the academic content standards and progress toward specific career path or cluster goals. The department would develop and disseminate student...recommended student competencies for career and technical education based on data from the grants. I'll also mention that the grant request, if the grant requests exceed funds available, funds would be prorated on a per-school-district basis. So, with that, I would...I would mention to you that I think this...this amendment puts the bill in the form that Senator Stuhr would like it and I will yield whatever time I have left to her, if she would like to use it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. Thank you, Senator Raikes, for actually explaining in great detail the committee amendments. I just have a couple additions that I might make. In the amendment, we also suggested that the Department of Education periodically review